

introducing legislation to apply these policies to healthcare plans regulated at the Federal level.

I have personally known the fear of being rushed to the emergency room. In that moment, no one should have to worry about their finances.

This bill not only seeks to save Americans money but also provides the peace of mind for them to focus on healing.

#### RECOGNIZING REVITALIZATION EFFORTS IN CLARION, A BLUEPRINT COMMUNITY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the community development and revitalization efforts of Clarion, Pennsylvania.

Recently, I was back in my district, touring Clarion's growing downtown region, meeting with small business owners and community leaders, and the progress and growth that I saw were truly exciting.

In 2015, Clarion was selected as a Blueprint Community, an initiative through the FHLBank Pittsburgh that seeks to revitalize older communities and neighborhoods. One of the shining stars of the Blueprint program is the Clarion River Brewing Company, and I am proud of their continued success as one of the many exciting small businesses in town.

But Clarion's blueprint included more than new businesses. It also outlines a plan to increase affordable housing options for current and future residents.

These blueprints don't offer one-size-fits-all plans for community development. Instead, they work with local leaders to better understand the needs of their residents to create custom, homegrown solutions that breathe new life into older communities.

Madam Speaker, I am excited to see what Clarion has in store, and I am rooting for its continued success.

#### CONGRATULATING UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. TAYLOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAYLOR. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to congratulate the University of Texas at Dallas on 50 years of educating students in north Texas.

In 1969, Texas Governor Preston Smith signed legislation to officially establish the University of Texas at Dallas as part of the UT system. Not only has UT grown immensely in the last 50 years, but our community takes great pride in the university's Tier One status.

Today, UTD offers over 140 degrees and helps young people follow their

dreams by providing them with a top-notch education. What was once vast prairie land has become a hub of higher learning and an opportunity for students to learn across the country.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the University of Texas at Dallas on a wonderful 50 days of academic excellence. Whoosh.

#### RAISING AWARENESS OF DAMAGE DONE BY MANDATORY ARBITRATION AND SUPPORTING THE FAIR ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I am proud to join my colleagues in the Democratic Women's Caucus in hosting this Special Order hour to raise awareness of the damage done by mandatory arbitration and of our support for H.R. 1423, the Forced Arbitration Injustice Repeal Act, or as we refer to it, the FAIR Act.

We are pleased that the Judiciary Committee is holding a markup on this bill as we speak.

Madam Speaker, what is stunning about this issue is that a recent study found that one is more likely to be struck by lightning than to win an arbitration case. In fact, the 5-year study found that, of 6,000 claims that were made on arbitration clauses, money awards were provided in only 137 cases.

Today, my colleagues will read accounts from just some of the women who have experienced this miscarriage of justice firsthand. Over 60 million workers are subject to forced arbitration, but even those staggering numbers fail to fully illustrate the suffering and human plight caused by mandatory arbitration.

Today, we share the experiences of women fighting back against the silence and shame, and we join them in demanding systemic change so that all workers are treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve.

Sterling Jewelers, known to many of us as Jared Jewelers or Kay Jewelers—Diane Acampora. Perhaps no company better exemplifies the harm caused by mandatory arbitration than Sterling Jewelers.

In April 2019, The New York Times Magazine published a story on the ongoing, decade-long pay-and-promotion lawsuit against Sterling Jewelers, which at one point included nearly 70,000 women. These stories should outrage each of us.

Diane of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, said that, after 5 years at Kay Jewelers and 6 years of experience at another store, she made \$2 to \$4 less per hour than her more recently hired, lesser experienced male colleagues.

According to the investigation, "When she was promoted to manager,

she attended the company's annual managers' meeting in Florida. On a shuttle bus back to the resort, she was pulled onto the lap of a manager, who held her tightly as he fondled her. At the same meeting, a district manager tried to kiss her. At a later meeting, she had to leave a hot tub because discussion turned uncomfortably sexual. She was later told that the hot-tub scene turned into an orgy."

And that is just the tip of the iceberg.

"There was Amanda Barger, a sales associate who made her way up to assistant manager, who after 5 years of employment complained that she was still making her starting salary but was brushed off by her manager; who watched the new guy who previously worked at a cell phone-cover kiosk be promoted ahead of her; who dared to complain to HR after her district manager invited her to a Chili's with a few other managers and, while they were eating, texted her from across the table, 'I want to come on your tits.'"

Marie Wolf's manager didn't seem to like her, despite the fact that she was a top salesperson at Jared. She didn't have "the Jared look," the manager told a colleague.

"Marie was tall and wore pants and blouses, not short skirt-suits, and she wore little makeup. One day, Marie asked for a raise, and the manager told her she was already making more than any other salesperson in the store." Not surprisingly, that was far from the truth.

Or, "Tammy Zenner, who was called 'Texas Tammy' by her colleagues because of the size of her breasts and who complained to her store manager that an executive visiting the store had rubbed himself against her from behind but was told when she complained that she should be flattered."

The culture of rampant gender discrimination, pay inequity, and sexual harassment at Sterling is the stuff of living nightmares suffered by so many working women, many of whom are the primary, if not only, breadwinner for their families.

Diane, Amanda, Marie, and Tammy are just 4 of nearly 70,000 women who have at some point joined the lawsuit against Sterling. And Sterling was able to hide the details of these allegations from its shareholders and from the public because all of their employees are forced to sign a forced arbitration agreement upon being hired.

That means all work-related disputes had to go through Sterling's in-house dispute resolution system, effectively gagging employees and destroying any chance of positive change.

It also, undoubtedly, resulted in countless other women facing similar types of abuse and discrimination. That is why the experiences of these women are so important for us to hear, so that Congress will pass the FAIR Act.

□ 1600

It is unacceptable that millions of employees are subjected to a system

that forces them to settle disputes through mandatory arbitration, where the company can control the process and shroud the outcome in secrecy.

I urge my colleagues to support the FAIR Act and strike a blow in the fight for fairness and transparency. No one should have to suffer harassment, assault, and degradation in silence in order to support themselves and their families and pursue their career dreams.

"Every kiss begins with Kay Jewelers" should be a jingle, not a job requirement. When couples are shopping for wedding rings, I hope they stay away from retail jewelers that treat women like sex toys or second-class citizens.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), one of the architects of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for all of her hard work on the Equal Rights Amendment and standing up and fighting for women.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues of the Democratic Women's Caucus to emphasize the importance of passing H.R. 1423, the FAIR Act for women in the workplace. I applaud the work of HANK JOHNSON, who has authored this legislation and, in some cases, worked with constituents over 14 years who are involved in forced arbitration of settlements that seem never to be settled. But statistics say that, if they are settled, usually the woman loses.

I might say that the Judiciary Committee is marking up this bill right now, as we speak. I hope it comes to the floor. We should have strong, bipartisan support for this injustice and pass the FAIR bill.

Forced arbitration is a trap. Binding a victim of workplace misconduct to arbitration, particularly anyone subjected to harassment or discrimination, is just plain wrong. Forced arbitration denies survivors a fair shot at justice. In fact, most employees do not even know they have entered into such an agreement until an incident occurs.

So not only has a person been harassed or had their rights violated at work, but now the employer gets to dictate how the matter is settled. How fair is that?

I want to recognize a woman present in the gallery this evening who knows all too well the deficiencies of forced arbitration agreements.

Karen Ward is a distinguished former partner at the New York accounting firm of Ernst & Young, which is refusing to let her take her sexual harassment case to a public courtroom because of a forced arbitration contract clause.

Not only is this unfair, it is expensive, as Ms. Ward has told us she has already spent \$185,000 to arbitrate her claims because of a provision in her contract that requires her to split the cost of the dispute resolution.

Ernst & Young and other firms with similar employment contract terms claim that forced arbitration is more efficient and streamlined. They don't tell you that the process is hidden from the public, that people can't see it. It is not transparent. And they don't tell you how secrecy surrounding arbitration settlements only helps perpetuate the problem of harassment or discrimination in the workplace. And it is costly emotionally and financially, as her case illustrates, with the \$185,000 cost so far.

Ms. Ward has said that she has heard from dozens of women bound by arbitration agreements. She said: "They see that the cost can caution financial ruin and they choose to live with injustice."

In other words, the system is built like a wall against the rights of women, costing them out of the process, making it totally unfair to them.

Underreporting and secretive settlements have roles in creating and cementing a culture of harassment in the workplace.

Passing the FAIR Act is an important step toward empowering all employees to report workplace misconduct and retain the option of seeking the remedy that they so choose; and it creates an incentive for every employer to focus on preventing these incidents before they occur, not to try to conceal them, case by case, knowing that it will never reach the light of day and that the employees will never win. There is no incentive to even bring a case for justice.

So Ms. Ward's fight has shone a light on this disturbing and unfair corporate behavior, and I am proud to fight alongside her and with my like-minded colleagues in the Women's Caucus and in Congress to change this and to support and pass the FAIR Act.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership on this issue and so many others.

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BUSTOS), my good friend and colleague who also has spent a great deal of time working on this issue of forced arbitration as it relates to sexual harassment.

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise also today in support of the FAIR Act and to bring an end to the secret arbitration process that silences victims of harassment and discrimination. This is a fight that we have been waging for years now. It is about doing the right thing and giving a voice to women like Jasmine Edwards.

Jasmine is an African American woman who was a comanager of a Guess retail store. When she began there, she came to the store with 15 years of retail experience and was promised that she would be promoted to manager shortly, but then the harassment started.

Her boss instructed the women at the store to "dress sexier." He regularly made racist and sexist comments about

employees and about customers. He would stare at female customers and then share his observations with Jasmine. He would continuously make offensive remarks about African Americans and would claim they would be more likely to steal from the store, and he even segregated employees by shift. His behavior was so concerning that even the customers noticed this and began complaining about him.

Jasmine voiced her concerns about her manager's behavior, but rather than taking her seriously, she was retaliated against and she was accused of theft. There was no investigation of those claims against her. She was bullied. Eventually the stress was too much to handle, and so Jasmine had to resign.

But she wasn't done fighting. She found an attorney and she filed a complaint in court. But this clothing company—again, Guess retailer—now says the case must be sent to arbitration. Why? Because on one of her first days at the retailer, the company says that Jasmine agreed to arbitrate any disputes.

Of course, the arbitration agreement requires her to stay silent about what happened; and, under the arbitration agreement, it is the company-funded arbitrator who gets to decide what type of evidence there would be.

I would ask anybody here: What kind of justice is that?

It will be no surprise to you that Jasmine would rather have an impartial judge hear her case. Wouldn't we all? But that is not something she will likely be allowed to get.

That is why we need to pass the FAIR Act now, because we have had enough. No more looking the other way when powerful men use their position of authority to victimize women. No more excuses for abusers just because of their status, their position, or their gender. No more telling women to stay silent or to get over it.

No more.

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), my good friend and colleague from the East Bay and a great advocate for equal rights.

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, first of all, I want to thank Congresswoman SPEIER for calling us together to speak on behalf of these courageous women and for her tireless work on their behalf, but also on behalf of women throughout the world.

Today, I join my colleagues in standing in support of the FAIR Act and in solidarity with women like Saturnina Plasencia, a Latina single mother of four who was working for \$13 an hour in a Dollar store in New York.

Now, her general manager subjected her to frequent sexual harassment, and after she refused his sexual demands, she alleged she was given fewer hours than new female hires. When she told him she was pregnant, he angrily responded: "The baby could have been mine."

Sadly, Saturnina did not realize when she started work that she had signed a mandatory arbitration agreement, and her case is now in arbitration.

Her attorney noted that New York passed a law that would have allowed Saturnina to take her case to court, but the law was struck down based on the Federal Arbitration Act. So Saturnina is forced to arbitrate her claims.

Her case is supported by the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund, which is housed and administered by the National Women's Law Center Fund.

Forced arbitration is just what it says; it is forced. So let's pass the FAIR Act so women will finally have the justice that they so deserve.

Enough is enough.

I thank Congresswoman SPEIER for allowing us to give voice to these injustices, and hopefully, soon, these women, because of the gentlewoman, because of the FAIR Act, will be able to move forward with their lives.

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California again for her outstanding leadership.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HILL), one of our new colleagues, but not new to fighting on behalf of women.

Ms. HILL of California. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on such an important issue.

I am here today to support the FAIR Act because of women like Kelli Stein, who, earlier this year, wrote a public letter to the Senate Finance Committee telling the story of her mother, June Lee.

In the letter, Kelli details how June was severely abused in a nursing home. The letter describes how her mother was dropped several times by staff members and sustained a broken shoulder. It took 5 days before the injury was x-rayed.

Because staff failed to check on her enough, June developed bed sores. She suffered countless urinary tract infections because the nursing home staff would not take her to the bathroom enough.

Nursing home staff even taped the nurse call cord, the cord that she needed to call for help, out of her reach so that they would not have to attend to her.

Kelli recounts how "throughout the entire time her mother was there, it was a never-ending ordeal of preventable health problem after preventable health problem, chipping away at her dignity as well as her mental and physical health."

Ultimately, the physical neglect caused her mental and physical health to suffer, and it greatly diminished her quality of life.

But when June's family tried to hold the nursing home accountable, they realized that they had unknowingly signed away their rights to hold that nursing home corporation accountable

for June's abuse and neglect. They had been forced to sign an arbitration agreement as a condition of June being admitted to the nursing home.

The FAIR Act would eliminate forced arbitration clauses in employment, consumer, and civil rights cases and would allow consumers and workers to agree to arbitration only after a dispute occurs.

This legislation protects older Americans who rely on the care of nursing home staff by allowing families to hold nursing homes accountable for the abuse or neglect of their loved ones.

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL), the co-chair of the Democratic Women's Caucus.

Ms. FRANKEL. Madam Speaker, it is great to be with the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER). I thought maybe we could have some sort of a colloquy. The gentlewoman looks like she is up to it.

Ms. SPEIER. Of course I am up to it.

Ms. FRANKEL. First all, I want to thank the gentlewoman for her leadership.

And I also know that Representative HANK JOHNSON has also been involved with the FAIR Act.

First, I want to just make a statement.

Forced arbitration deprives men and women—not just the women, but men—of fundamental legal protections and also prevents—this is important—the public from knowing about the harm that corporations often create or the secrecy of arbitration.

□ 1615

So I am very pleased to join you in supporting the Forced Arbitration Injustice Repeal Act, or FAIR Act. So, you know, I want to talk to you about a woman named Lilly, but I want to read this to you. This is an advertisement from a massage spa that Lilly went to. And this is what it says, "The world is out to get you. Thankfully, we got you. Stress can take a toll on your body, and even though your body works hard to keep it up, it needs help. Keeping your body running efficiently should be high on your to-do list, and regular massage is a key to operating at peak efficiency. Keeping your body in optimal working condition with routine massage along with rapid tension relief and total body stretch is easy at any Massage Envy franchise location."

Now, I would assume you would agree it is pretty appealing.

Ms. SPEIER. Actually, no, I don't. It sounds like someone talking about repairing one's car, but, you know . . .

Ms. FRANKEL. Anyway, this is the advertisement. We got your back. And the fact of the matter is, as I said, The world is out to get you. Thankfully, we got you. And they did get Lilly, who I am here to talk about today, because on her visit to the Massage Envy Spa she was sexually assaulted.

First, she tried to get—it is one of these things where you sign up and get

a series. So, first, she tried to get out, and she had to get the app, and she tried to cancel her membership, which she wasn't even allowed to do because in the little fine line it said, you have to go to arbitration.

Ms. SPEIER. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. FRANKEL. I yield to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. SPEIER. So this is a consumer who went to get a package of three massages at Massage Envy?

Ms. FRANKEL. Right.

Ms. SPEIER. She signed up for it and then decided she didn't want to do it and didn't read the fine print that said she had to go to arbitration?

Ms. FRANKEL. Right. And she didn't want to go back because she was sexually assaulted. And so, we are not talking about, obviously, she can make a criminal claim, but she wanted to actually get out of having to continue to pay Massage Envy.

She is just an example of, literally, the many women this has happened to. There was an investigation. There are about 1,200 of these franchises across the country, and BuzzFeed did an investigation, and they found that there were about more than 180 women who had been sexually assaulted at these spas.

Now think about this, aside from the criminal consequences, which obviously there must be, the company does not want to let you out of your contract unless they force you to arbitration.

Maybe you can explain again why forced arbitration is really so contrary to our system of justice?

Ms. SPEIER. Well, because there is no justice. Oftentimes, as we have pointed out, these arbitration claims end up benefiting the company as opposed to the individual. So few of them actually result in claims being paid out to the consumer or the employee who was impacted by it.

So, once again, it is a, you know, buyer beware, employee beware, because it is set up, not for fairness, but to protect the employer or the retailer in the case that you pointed out.

Ms. FRANKEL. Is it true that in many of these arbitration cases that the company actually gets to choose the arbitrator and then the arbitrator—it is the same arbitrator, and then what are the implications of that?

Ms. SPEIER. Well, again, the lack of fairness, because that particular arbitrator is chosen each time. That arbitrator is probably chosen because he or she finds in favor of the company, and the result is that fairness is thrown out the window.

Ms. FRANKEL. And, obviously, the arbitrator wants to be rehired. And so the power is with the employer. And I think it is important to know, and I think we can help.

We have been talking today about instances of sexual abuse and sexual harassment, but what people should know is that these arbitration agreements

touch almost every part of our life. For example, when you go into a doctor's office or a hospital.

Ms. SPEIER. A doctor's office. I am about to tell a story about a nursing home. Here is a patient in a nursing home who gets violated, and then there is this arbitration clause that prevents any kind of relief for that particular person who was a client at the nursing home. So it really does impact virtually every aspect or every contract you sign. Every app that you sign up for probably has an arbitration clause.

Ms. FRANKEL. So what this means in practical terms, we always think if we are harmed or we are wronged that we should have our day in court where a judge or a jury can hear evidence publicly and decide the case. But really what we have now is this system, I call it the system of injustice with this forced arbitration that is secret that is really weighted towards the corporation.

Ms. SPEIER. That is correct. Without being harsh here, it is rigged. You are not necessarily, in all likelihood, going to get a fair hearing. You are not going to have someone who is independent. Oftentimes they are employed by, selected by the corporation, and the result is, as you pointed out, that they want to be rehired again, so they find reasons to be supportive of the corporation and not the individual.

Ms. FRANKEL. And, again, just to emphasize this, maybe you can give some examples of how this results in a coverup of wrongdoing that really keeps other people, whether they are employees or consumers, from being protected?

Ms. SPEIER. That is absolutely correct. And it is really important for us to make the public aware that whether you know it or not you are probably signing these arbitration clauses every time you sign up for a particular program, a particular service, or you are being employed by a specific company.

Ms. FRANKEL. And one more point, if you can emphasize again, when you go into arbitration, does it cost the consumer or the employee money?

Ms. SPEIER. Oftentimes it does. In one of the cases that our colleague from New York reflected on, it was costing her hundreds of thousands of dollars.

In this case I am going to speak about, the patient, the client at the nursing home had to pay money, some \$3,000 for the rental of the room in which the arbitration took place. So it is like a double slap in the face.

Ms. FRANKEL. So before I let you go on with your next story, can you just reemphasize again exactly what this legislation will do?

Ms. SPEIER. This legislation, and again, they are marking it up right now in the Judiciary Committee, is going to return to the consumer, return to the employee, the opportunity to not sign a forced arbitration agreement when they are at the most vulnerable position, typically when they

are being hired or when they are requesting a service and, frankly, not knowing that the arbitration clause is there.

Ms. FRANKEL. Well, I think you will bring a lot of justice to people all over the country, and I want to thank you for your leadership.

Ms. SPEIER. I thank the gentlewoman from Florida. I am going to end, Madam Speaker, with two cases because they are both egregious in their own right.

One is about Irene Morissette, an 87-year-old Catholic nun. Now think about this for a minute. An 87-year-old Catholic nun was raped in her nursing home near Birmingham, Alabama. Police and medical records revealed a brutal attack. "Police investigators found two semen stains in Morissette's bed and blood on the 'inside rear area' of her green-and-pink-flowered pajama bottoms, which had been shoved underneath the mattress." Equally alarming was the article recalls how the medical examiner later wrote that Ms. Morissette was afraid to call anyone because she was afraid the assailant would be the one to come back to her room.

Ms. Morissette told police in an interview several days after the attack that she felt like "a piece of trash" because she had honored her vow of chastity for over 6 decades and had lost something she had valued for her entire life. That one really breaks my heart.

Due to a forced arbitration clause in the admissions contract she signed when she was admitted, Ms. Morissette was left with no choice. Her family could not pursue their claim in a public court of law, but was, rather, forced into arbitration. In the forced arbitration proceedings, the arbitrator invented outlandish arguments of hearsay and conjecture, including claims that Ms. Morissette did not appear "upset enough" about the rape for it to be believable. Mind you, there is evidence, there is DNA evidence.

Ms. Morissette lost, and as a final insult received a bill for \$3,000 to cover the cost of the room rental for the forced arbitration proceedings.

No nursing home resident or family should ever have to go through what Ms. Morissette endured. That is why we are calling this particular piece of legislation the FAIR Act and urging a vote on the House floor.

One last story that I would like to tell is of Rosette Pambakian. Ms. Pambakian was a senior executive at the dating app Tinder. She was one of the earliest hires and the longest standing female executive at Tinder, writing their very first press release. She was the head of marketing and communications, ran a department of more than 40 employees, and served as the face of the brand on panels and in the press.

Ms. Pambakian had sued her former employer for sexual harassment and assault. Now Tinder is one of those dat-

ing apps. According to her lawsuit, former Match Group and Tinder CEO Gregory Blatt assaulted Ms. Pambakian in 2016 at a Tinder holiday party. Blatt made a lewd overture to her saying that he got a hard-on "every time I look at you," and "let's get out of here." Pambakian left the party and went to a colleague's hotel room with another coworker.

Later in the night Blatt showed up. According to the lawsuit, he began forcibly groping her breasts and upper thighs and kissing her shoulders, neck, and chest without her consent in front of other subordinates.

A meaningful investigation of the assault, which was required under company policies and California law, never happened. Pambakian alleges she was never even interviewed. Instead, she claims she was marginalized, subjected to additional harassing and offensive behavior, put on administrative leave, particularly accused of consenting to advances, calling it "consensual cuddling," and finally, wrongfully terminated.

The lawsuit further alleges IAC and Match tried to buy Ms. Pambakian's silence following the assault by offering her a higher salary and more stock options on the condition that she sign a nondisclosure agreement. She declined.

According to her attorney, Rosette is bringing this action not only to right the personal wrong against her, but to stand with the many women in the tech industry and beyond who have been "blamed and shamed into submission or silence."

Match and Blatt have filed a motion to have the case sent to arbitration, even though Ms. Pambakian was forced to sign an arbitration agreement after the assault and after she rejected the proposed NDA. Her pursuit of justice is ongoing.

I now yield to Congresswoman SCHAKOWSKY, the gentlewoman from Illinois, who will also be telling a story.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I really appreciate my colleague setting up this Special Order to talk about something that is so incredibly important and often not really brought to the surface.

I am here today to join my colleagues in support for the FAIR Act, because I don't believe that victims of racial discrimination should be forced into a secretive process in which they have no access to justice and accountability.

This is especially important to me because of the story of two Floridians, Glenda and Peter Perez. Both worked for Cigna until forced arbitration absolutely ruined their lives.

□ 1630

As reported by Business Insider, everything was going well and, "They were living in a newly built home in Ruskin, Florida, happily raising their three kids." That is what they say about themselves. But due to forced arbitration, things turned for the worse.

Two years ago, Glenda, who is Latinx, was fired after reporting racial discrimination. Unknown to her, buried in the fine print of the employment agreement she signed along with other onboarding documents when she was first hired was a forced arbitration clause, so Glenda had no choice but to go into forced arbitration proceedings.

But as the article notes, "Instead of the simple and fair process that arbitration promises to be, Perez saw her claim dismissed without so much as a hearing, only to learn later that her apparently independent arbitrator was so friendly with the attorney representing Cigna that the arbitrator invited him to his 50th birthday party."

To no surprise, the arbitrator sided with Glenda's employer, Cigna.

When her husband, Peter, complained about the unfairness of the process and how the arbitrator truly was not independent, guess what? He too was fired.

Now Glenda and Peter are struggling to support themselves and their three children and trying to fight their wrongful termination in court.

No worker should ever have to go through what Glenda and Peter have endured. This is why I support ending forced arbitration by voting for the FAIR Act.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues who care about justice, who care about fairness, to support the FAIR Act.

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) for her comments on this Special Order. As she said at the end, she is one of the loudest voices to make sure there is justice in this country.

Madam Speaker, we could tell many more stories tonight, but I am going to close now by thanking all of my colleagues from the Democratic Women's Caucus for sharing the stories of women and men who are hurt by forced arbitration and demonstrating the human impact of this corrupt and abusive practice.

We are eager to have the House of Representatives take a vote on the FAIR Act on the House floor because survivors deserve their day in court and workers deserve dignified and respectful workplaces.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members to avoid referencing occupants of the gallery.

#### MODERNIZING SANCTIONS TO COMBAT TERRORISM—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 116-61)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), the United Nations Participation Act of 1945 (22 U.S.C. 287c), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and in view of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 1373 of September 28, 2001, Resolution 1526 of January 30, 2004, Resolution 1988 of June 17, 2011, Resolution 1989 of June 17, 2011, Resolution 2253 of December 17, 2015, Resolution 2255 of December 21, 2015, Resolution 2368 of July 20, 2017, and Resolution 2462 of March 28, 2019, I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") modernizing sanctions to combat terrorism.

I have determined that it is necessary to consolidate and enhance sanctions to combat acts of terrorism and threats of terrorism by foreign terrorists, acts that are recognized and condemned in the above-referenced United Nations Security Council resolutions. I have terminated the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12947 of January 23, 1995, and revoked Executive Order 12947, as amended by Executive Order 13099 of August 20, 1998. The order builds upon the initial steps taken in Executive Order 12947 and takes additional steps to deal with the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13224 of September 23, 2001, with respect to the continuing and immediate threat of grave acts of terrorism and threats of terrorism committed by foreign terrorists, which include acts of terrorism that threaten the Middle East peace process.

I am enclosing a copy of the order I have issued.

DONALD J. TRUMP.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, September 9, 2019.

#### SUPPORT D.C. STATEHOOD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for 30 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor this afternoon because of the importance of a coming date. It will be known as a historic date in the Congress of the United States, Thursday, September 19, which is the day that, prerequisite to coming to the floor, the Committee on Oversight and Reform will hold the first hearing on D.C. statehood, H.R. 51, in 26 years. That will be a historic hearing.

This is not an informational hearing to let us know about statehood. It is a jurisdictional hearing, the prerequisite to going to the House floor.

The residents of the District of Columbia, who are number one—mark that fact—number one in taxes paid to support the Government of the United States, do not have full rights, the same rights, as other Americans.

Yes, I can come to the House floor to speak any time I want to, and yes, with

Democrats in power, I have reclaimed the Committee of the Whole vote, which means that when the committee is gathered here in the House voting on at least some matters, I get to vote. But, Madam Speaker, on final votes, I cannot vote, even though, as you have heard, the people I represent contribute more Federal taxes than any people in the United States, more per capita than New York and California and Florida. You name the State, you will be talking about a State where, per capita, its residents contribute less to support the very government that is ours and theirs than the people of the District of Columbia.

So, yes, I have introduced the D.C. statehood bill.

Let me predict right now that that bill will pass. It has virtually enough cosponsors to pass. Most bills come to this House floor without many cosponsors, and yet we know they will pass. Well, when you have almost enough cosponsors to pass the bill, Madam Speaker, I say to my good friends who are not on the bill, this is the time to get on the bill so that they will be part of history. I do believe this bill will, in fact, pass the House of Representatives.

There has already been a forecast that that will happen. That forecast was in H.R. 1, which has already passed the House. Every Democratic Member voted for H.R. 1.

H.R. 1 contains findings for D.C. statehood. It found that District residents pay the highest taxes per capita, that residents of your Nation's Capital have fulfilled all the obligations of statehood, fighting in all of the Nation's wars, including the war that gave rise to the United States of America itself.

It found that there were no historical, constitutional, financial, or economic reasons why the 700,000 residents of your Nation's Capital should not become part of a state.

These are findings in H.R. 1 that every Democrat has already voted for. These were findings for statehood for the District of Columbia.

It found that the District is in one of the strongest fiscal positions in the United States: a \$14.6 billion budget, a surplus of \$2.8 billion, total personal income higher than that of seven States, per capita personal consumption expenditures higher than those of any State, and total personal consumption expenditures greater than those of seven States.

We are not talking about an entity not worthy of statehood. The qualifications are clear, and there are qualifications to become a state.

How do you become a state? You get voted a state by a majority vote in this House. It is hard to become a state, but those qualifications have been met.

Let us compare the District of Columbia to States that are already States. Let's take two States of the Union, Vermont and Wyoming. I begrudge them nothing, except to say